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ABSTRACT

With a unique focus on the effects of poverty on parenting in Britain, this book explores what professionals and policy makers can do to support families living in poverty. The book details findings and conclusions of a large national study of parents living in poverty conducted by the Policy Research Bureau between 1997 and 1999. The study involved face-to-face survey interviews with over 1,700 parents or main carers of children up to 16 years of age and in-depth qualitative follow-up interviews with a subsample of 40 parents. The study examined community-level poverty and its relationships to family and individual problems, such as low-income, poor mental health and child behavioral difficulties, as well as the wider help parents receive, through both formal support services and informal networks of family and friends. The first part of the book provides an introduction and background to the study, followed by the study methodology and demographic characteristics of the sample. The second part examines stress factors found at the individual, family, and community and neighborhood levels. The third part examines social supports to parents in poor environments, at the informal, semiformal and formal levels, as well as deficits in support found in poor neighborhoods. The fourth part of the book looks at parents' coping strategies, identifying why certain risk factors appear more prejudicial to coping than others, and the extent to which social support enhances parents' ability to cope. Part 5 concludes the book with a summary of the study's key findings in relation to patterns of need and support, what parents really want from support services, and implications and recommendations for policy and practice. (Contains 185 references.) (HTH)

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